

LANGUAGE truth & GOSSIP

**A newsletter for alumni and friends
of the MSU Department of Philosophy**

Language, Truth & Gossip is published annually by the Department of Philosophy, Michigan State University, 503 S. Kedzie Hall, East Lansing, MI 48824

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Please visit the Department of Philosophy online at www.philosophy.msu.edu. Send your news to Joy Franks at franksj@msu.edu.

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FACULTY NOTES
& ACTIVITIES

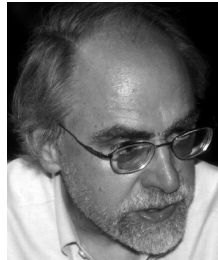
MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE NEWS
UNDERGRADUATE NEWS

SPRING 2010

Greetings from the Chairperson

Dear Friends of Philosophy at MSU,



Richard Peterson
Department Chair

Once again we are reporting a busy year of activity mixed with a good deal of uncertainty as the realities of diminished budgets begin to sink in. We are now completing the first of a projected three year process of budget reductions that would leave us with a budget of about 80% of what we had two years ago. Some of these cuts come from the operating expenses of the Department, since tenure system positions are not in play and the temporary staffing we now have is not covered by our regular budget. The rest of the burden falls on our graduate program, with us facing as much as a 75% reduction in fund-

ing for graduate students. For now, we have fended off the kind of cuts that would mean the end of a quality program, since we've been able to win back some of the projected losses. But we have no assurances about what comes next.

This has been a year of other uncertainties as well, with the possibility of our losing several offices as the Religious Studies faculty were to join us on the already crowded fifth floor of South Kedzie Hall. This was really part of a consolidation of staffing, which would have involved our losing one of our two able office staff. Fortunately, the push and pull of the bureaucratic process has allowed us to avoid this outcome, at least for the foreseeable future. In the meantime, we have been put on notice that we need to bring in more money from outside. Last summer's program for visiting Chinese students was one project that has yielded some income and promises to be a recurring and perhaps expanding venture. We are also exploring an online Masters level certificate program in ethical issues facing professionals engaged in international projects, thus drawing on our strengths in bioethics, ethics and development, technology issues, environmental philosophy, feminism, race issues, democratic process, and peace and justice studies (to name more than a few). Whether this will prove successful remains to be seen, but we envision a pilot offering in Summer 2011. We hope that this and other initiatives may allow us to sustain a reasonable colloquium schedule along with travel for faculty and graduate students, and perhaps eventually to add support for the graduate program itself.

Despite the budgetary headaches and the difficulties of responding effectively to them (which includes rethinking some of our courses to allow for larger numbers of students and fewer teaching assistants), we have managed to run a lively year of lectures, workshops, and conferences, for example, a bioethics conference on diminished consciousness, a social and political thought workshop on technology in continental philosophy, and our hosting the Ancient Philosophy Society national meetings this April. Once again we've brought in major philosophers through the Benjamin, McCracken, and Suter Endowed Lectures, so generously supported by our former graduate, Steve Holzman. Our "works in progress" colloquia have foregrounded projects by our own faculty and provided a nice occasion for discussion about our ongoing work.

The undergraduate program is flourishing, as our numbers of majors and minors continue to grow. The new Philosophy and Law minor is a success and has led to more contacts with the Law College, including a joint symposium this spring on Supreme Court responses to same sex marriage law. Our new internship program is now on

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Philosophy Events on Campus

MSU philosophers hosted an unusual array of events that brought important scholars to campus and involved colleagues and students from other departments and the region.

PRESENTATIONS BY MSU PHILOSOPHY FACULTY

DAN STEEL (Philosophy): “Non-Consequentialism and the Dilemma Objection to the Precautionary Principle”; **Hilde Lindemann**: “Caring and Coercion: What Counts as Autonomy at the End of Life?”; **Fred Rauscher**: “Chaos and Control: The Nature of Kant’s Political Philosophy”; **Christian Lotz**: “Poetry as Anti-Discourse. Formalism, Hermeneutics, and the Poetics of Paul Celan.”

VISITING SPEAKERS

Robert Richards (U. of Chicago): “The Enchantment of the World: Darwin’s Theory of Mind in Nature” (Dept. of History, co-sponsored by Philosophy); **Patrick Grim** (SUNY at Stony Brook): “Philosophical Implications of Network Structure: Cooperation, Communication, and Epistemology”; **Victor Caston** (University of Michigan): “Aristotle on Perceptual Content”; **Cristine Lafont** (Northwestern U.): “Pluralism and Global Justice”; **Jill Hernandez** (University of Texas at San Antonio): “The Moral Integrity Problem Reloaded.”

WORKSHOPS AND CONFERENCES

- 10/3/09: Workshop in Continental Philosophy: **Technology, Time, and the Political**. Modernity and Memory From Heidegger to Stiegler. **Christian Lotz and Kyle Whyte**
- 11/21/09: Bioethics Workshop: **Minimal Consciousness** Guest Speaker: **Grant Gillett** (University of Otago, New Zealand). Co-sponsored by the College of Arts and Letters.
- 2/19/10: **Edges**: Graduate Conference in the College of Arts and Letters. Papers, panels, exhibits/installations, showcasing the work of CAL graduate students.



Kyle Whyte

- 3/16/10: **Bioethics East-West: Cross-Cultural Conversations at the Edges of Life**. **Miho Ogino** (Graduate School of American Studies, Doshisha University): “Abortion, Reproductive Technologies, and Feminist Bioethics in Japan” Asian Studies Center Colloquium Series Co-sponsored by Philosophy.
- 3/26, 27/10: **11th Annual Graduate Philosophy Conference**. Keynote: **Alison Bailey** (Illinois State U.) “On Intersectionality and the Whiteness of Feminist Philosophy”; Faculty speaker: **Kristie Dotson** (MSU).
- 4/21/10 **Imagining Michigan’s Future: Human Values in a New Economy**. Featured Speaker: **David Hollister** (Lansing Mayor, 1993-2003)
- 4/22-25/10 MSU hosted the **Xth annual meeting of the Ancient Philosophy Society**, attracting over a hundred participants and auditors internationally.

ENDOWED LECTURES

- 9/25/09: **Martin Benjamin Distinguished Guest Lecture**. **Victoria McGeer** (Princeton): “Co-reactive Attitudes and the Making of Moral Community”
- 10/9/09: **Charles McCracken Distinguished Guest Lecture**. **Michael Della Rocca** (Yale): “Violations of the Principle of Sufficient Reason”
- 3/19/10: **Ronald Suter Distinguished Guest Lecture**. **Samuel Freeman** (U. of Pennsylvania): “Capitalism in the Classical and High Liberal Traditions.” **Distinguished Lecture**.

NOTES FROM THE CENTER FOR ETHICS AND HUMANITIES IN THE LIFE SCIENCES

Tom Tomlinson (*Director*)

Philosophy faculty in the Center for Ethics and Humanities in the Life Sciences are hard at work and their endeavors resulted in a number of recent book publications, honors, contracts, and grants.



Ann Mongoven

Judith Andre and **Ann Mongoven** have chapters in *Maternal Thinking: Philosophy, Politics, Practice*, a celebration of the twentieth anniversary of Sara Ruddick’s influential book on maternal thinking.

Leonard Fleck’s book *Just Caring: Health Care Rationing and Democratic Deliberation* tackles such questions as what does it mean to be a “just” and “caring” society when we have limited resources to meet unlimited health care needs?



Leonard Fleck

Ann Mongoven’s book *Just Love: Transforming Civic Virtue* reflects on changes in the practice of civic virtue described as an ethic of political involvement for all citizens. Dr. Mongoven was an MSU Lilly Teaching Fellow, 2008-2009, for her course: “Election ’08 and the Nation’s Health.” This class sought to move from discussion to deliberation.

As a result of a linkage agreement with the Center for Humanities and Life Culture at Dong-A University in Busan, Korea, the Center is currently hosting **Jin-Kyong (Regina) Kim**, for a year of post-doctoral bioethics research. Dr. Kim’s interests center on various end-of-life controversies.

The Center’s recent contract with Sparrow Hospital builds on our long involvement in Sparrow’s Ethics Committee. The education and consultation service will offer targeted ethics debriefings on select clinical ethics issues identified by specific hospital units, as well as institution-wide ethics grand rounds.



Tom Tomlinson
Director

GRADUATE STUDENT REPORT

Eric Berling



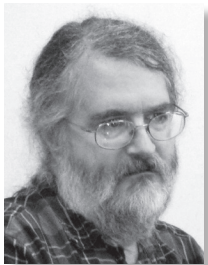
Eric Berling

This year the graduate students continued their history of productive endeavors. Lauren Woomer and Joe Stramondo, along with the supporting contributions of many other graduate students, organized a very successful MSU Graduate Philosophy Conference, marking the 11th consecutive year of the Department's proud annual tradition. Kristie Dotson was the featured faculty speaker and Alison Bailey of Illinois State University delivered the keynote talk, while several of our own graduate students provided rich and insightful commentaries.

In addition to hosting our own conference, the graduate students represented the department over this past year by presenting at a large variety of conferences on a range of issues that reflect our varied philosophical interests. Furthermore, several of us contributed to the academic literature with publications in a variety of refereed journals and books. The continuation of the Philosophy for Kids program also helped several of our graduate students expose young local minds to the enriching perspective of philosophy.

News From the Graduate Director

Fred Gifford (*Associate Chair*)



Fred Gifford
Associate Chair

DOCTORATES AWARDED 2008-09:

- **Kwang-su Mok**
Development Ethics as Recognition
Now at Konkuk University, South Korea
- **Eric Lambert**
Mutual Recognition and Social Conflict
Assistant Prof., Philosophy, Kalamazoo College
Humanities and Performing Arts, LCC

- **Lisa Campo-Engelstein**
Contraceptive Responsibility: Trust, Gender, and Ideology

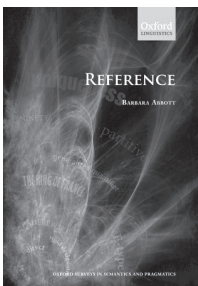
Post-doctorate Fellow Feinberg, now at the School of Medicine Northwestern University

NEW JOBS FOR OUR RECENT PHDS INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- **Kwang-su Mok**, who received his PhD from us in 2009, has taken up a faculty position at Konkuk University in South Korea.
- **Robert Brice**, who received his PhD from MSU in 2004, has begun a tenure stream position at Loyola University, New Orleans, where he has had a temporary position for a couple of years.

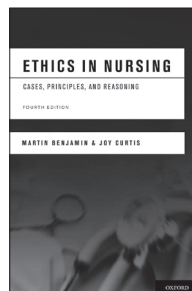
BOOKS WRITTEN BY MSU PHILOSOPHERS

Since the last *Language, Truth, and Gossip*, philosophers associated with the Department published the following books:

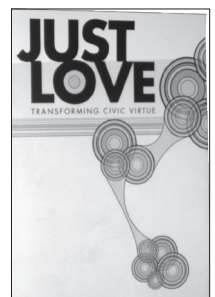


Barbara Abbott: *Reference* (Oxford: 2010)

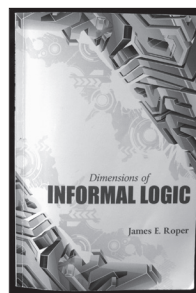
Martin Benjamin and Joy Curtis (Nursing Emerita):
Ethics in Nursing: Cases, Principles, and Reasoning, Fourth Edition (Oxford: 2010)



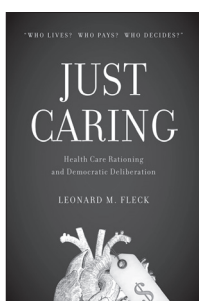
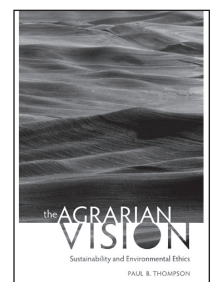
Ann M. Mongoven: *Just Love: Transforming Civic Virtue* (Indiana U. Press: 2009)



James E. Roper:
Dimensions of Informal Logic (Kendall Hunt: 2009)



Paul Thompson: *The Agrarian Vision: Sustainability and Environmental Ethics (Culture of the Land)* (U. of Kentucky Press: 2010)



Len Fleck: *Just Caring: Health Care Rationing and Democratic Deliberation* (Oxford: 2009)

News About Faculty (Including Emeritus)

Seven faculty members received **LETTERS OF COMMENDATION FOR EXEMPLARY TEACHING** from the Department of Residence Life-Research, Assessment, And Technology in February 2010: **Kristie Dotson, Hilde Lindemann, Christian Lotz, Debra Nails, Fred Rauscher, James Roper, and Kyle Whyte.** **James Lindemann Nelson** and **Hilde Lindemann** will direct a study abroad program on "Ethics and Literature in London." **Fred Gifford** will direct a study abroad program on "Ethics and History of Development and Health Care in Costa Rica."

Judy Andre is in Daegu, South Korea, for a few months. Judy is studying Korean while in Daegu, So. Korea. She'll also be speaking at Dong-A University in Busan on the place of the humanities in medical education.



Kristie Dotson: Kristie received from RCPD the Outstanding Faculty and Staff Award for her contribution to "equal opportunities and encouragement of excellence" in teaching, April 2009.

Kristie Dotson

Fred Gifford: Coeditor [with **Steve Esquith**] of *Capabilities, Power and Institutions: Toward a More Critical Development Ethics* and author of *Philosophy of Medicine: Handbook of the Philosophy of Science*, to appear shortly. He coauthored "Bioethics in Costa Rica: Origins and Challenges," which appeared in *The Social Functions of Bioethics Around the Globe*. He also gave three presentations, at Yale and in Rotterdam and Madrid.



Todd Hedrick

Todd Hedrick: Todd delivered two papers on *The Frankfurt School* and the *Theory of Democracy*, one at Texas A & M and one in Prague, Czech Republic.

Hilde Lindemann published "But I Could Never Have One": The Abortion Intuition and Moral Luck," "Holding One Another (Well, Wrongly, Clumsily) in a Time of Dementia," and "Autonomy, Beneficence, and Gezelligheid: Lessons in Moral Theory from the Dutch." She also made several presentations.



Hilde Lindemann

Christian Lotz: Christian received an MSU teacher/scholar award. He published "Representation or Sensation? A Critique of Deleuze's Philosophy of Painting" and "Formations: Gadamer's Hermeneutics of Images," (English and Persian). He also made three presentations.



John McClendon

John McClendon: *Conversations with My Christian Friends* is under contract. He published six articles in *The Encyclopedia of African American History, 1896 to the Present* and "The African American Philosopher: The Missing Chapter in McCumber on McCarthyism." "The History of African American Philosophy and Philosophers: A General Outline" [co-authored with Dr. Stephen Ferguson] will appear later this year. Prof. McClendon made five presentations at institutions in the United States. He co-edited the

next APA Newsletter on Philosophy and the Black Experience.

Matt McKeon: Matt did a book review for *History and Philosophy of Logic*. He plans to complete a book on logical consequence by June. He also managed the creation of an online version of Philosophy 130 and gave a Teaching Commons presentation on this project. He has been very active on Departmental and University committees.



Matt McKeon



Debra Nails

Debra Nails: Debra published "Socrates," (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy) and "Academic Freedom and Tenure: Cedarville University (Ohio)" [with **David A. Hoekema**]. "The Trial and Death of Socrates," was reprinted. She also gave six presentations—including two in South Africa where she taught Plato to 458 freshmen, and co-taught Spinoza to graduate students. She helped organize MSU's hosting of the Xth annual meeting of the Ancient Philosophy Society in April.

Jim Nelson presented several papers in New Zealand during June and July 2009 and published "Alzheimer's Disease and Socially Extended Mentation," "Hypotheticals, Analogies, Death's Harms, and Organ Procurement," "Berger on Burdens," "Dealing Death and Retrieving Organs," and several other short pieces.



Jim Nelson

Rob Pennock published "The Postmodern Sin of Intelligent Design Creationism," "HybrID: A Hybridization of Indirect and Direct Encodings for Evolutionary Computation" (with **Jeff Clune, Benjamin E. Beckmann, and Charles Ofria**), "Using Avida-ED for teaching and learning about evolution in undergraduate introductory biology courses" (with **Elena B. Spath, Tammy Long, and Diane Ebert-May**), "The Sensitivity of HyperNEAT to Different Geometric Representations of a Problem" (with **Jeff Clune and Charles Ofria**), as well as various book reviews. He also gave a number of presentations and was part of the team that received a five year \$25m dollar NSF Science and Technology Center grant.



Rob Pennock

Dick Peterson published chapters on violence and on human rights in *Between Global Violence and the Ethics of Peace: Philosophical Perspectives*, Wiley-Blackwell, 2009, and gave a paper on violence, imagination and the media. He spent 10 days in China representing the new program in Global Studies in the Arts and Humanities.



Fred Rauscher

Fred Rauscher: Fred published "Kant as Metaphysical Naturalist," "Freedom and Reason in Groundwork III," and a book review of *Kant on Beauty and Biology* by Rachel Zuckert. He also gave three presentations, two in Brazil and one at MSU.

James Roper: *Dimensions of Informal Logic* appeared in October of 2009. Prof. Roper presented different papers at five national and international conferences and published "Every Child Left Behind: The Impact of Standardized Testing on Democratic Civic Education,"

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DEVELOPMENTS IN THE UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM

Christian Lotz (*Director of Undergraduate Studies*)



Christian Lotz

I am happy to report that our undergraduate program is in good shape. 124 students, 30 of whom are women, are currently enrolled in the philosophy program (major and minor), which is an increase of 15 students since the beginning of this semester; this is primarily due to the recruitment of new students by our graduate students. The philosophy minor and our new philosophy and law minor turn out to be popular choices. However, the number of female students and minority students is still not sufficient, though, on a more positive note, our tutoring program, which Dan Steel initiated, is very successful. Abelard Podgorski, Karl Devries, and Jessica Hix have done an excellent job as tutors. In the future, the Philosophy Club will be coordinated by an undergraduate student and one of our graduate students. In addition, we intend to establish a mentor program that couples graduate students with undergraduate students who study philosophy.

This year we established a blog with news and information that are of interest for our undergraduate program and our undergraduate students. Please check the following link: <http://msuphilosophy.wordpress.com/>.

Undergraduate Award Winners

ZERBY ESSAY PRIZE WINNER 2010

The Zerby Essay Prize this year goes to **Caitlin Wylie** for her essay entitled *Pleasures of the Intellect in Mill's Utilitarianism*. The following is taken from the selection committee's report: "The committee agrees that Caitlin Wylie's "Pleasures of the Intellect in Mill's Utilitarianism" is the clear winner. It lays out Mill's [...]" Read more here: <http://www.philosophy.msu.edu/undergraduate-studies/prizes-and-awards>



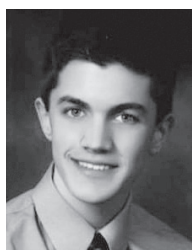
Caitlin Wylie

THE MARTIN BENJAMIN AND BRUCE MILLER AWARD 2010

The Philosophy Department selected this year two outstanding students for the Martin Benjamin and Bruce Miller Award 2010: **Lisa Ossian** and **Christopher Klerkx**.



Lisa Ossian



Christopher Klerkx

Read more here: <http://www.philosophy.msu.edu/undergraduate-studies/prizes-and-awards>

News About Faculty *continued from page 4*

"Dispositions and Their Uses," "Teaching Students How Not to Reason: A New Approach to Teaching Informal Fallacies," and "Paternalism and the Right to an Education."

Lisa Schwartzman: Lisa published "Non-Ideal Theorizing, Social Groups, and Knowledge of Oppression: A Response" and a book review of *Sex, Culture, and Justice*:



Lisa Schwartzman

The Limits of Choice by Clare Chambers. She also presented "Rational Choice Theory and Feminist Critique," at two conferences.

Daniel Steel: Dan published "Testability and Ockham's Razor: How Formal and Statistical Learning Theory Converge in the New Riddle of Induction." Partially supported by an IRGP grant, he is writing *Erring on the Side of Caution: Philosophy of Science and the Precautionary Principle*. He also presented two papers.

Paul B. Thompson: Paul is a prolific publisher and presenter of papers—especially in agricultural, animal, and environmental ethics. For example, in 2009 he published three conference proceedings, seven book chapters, four book reviews, three newsletter/magazine articles, and one scientific and technical report. He gave three different presentations



Jim Roper



Paul Thompson

at international meetings and seven at national meetings. Recently his book, *The Agrarian Vision: Sustainability and Environmental Ethics*, was published.



Dan Steel



MARILYN FRYE RETIRES

An imaginative and influential voice in modern feminist thought and one of our Department's outstanding teachers, Marilyn Frye has formally retired from the Department and concluded her work as Associate Dean in the College. Author of influential books and articles, Marilyn has been honored numerous times, as a University Distinguished Professor, Distinguished Woman Philosopher by the Society for Women in Philosophy, and the Phi Beta Kappa Romanell Professor in Philosophy. Stepping back from her teaching provides for Marilyn the opportunity to pursue another career as a psychoanalytic therapist. Since she plans to remain in the area, we look forward to Marilyn's ongoing presence in the life of the Department.

Greetings from the Chairperson *continued from page 1*

the books and our undergraduate tutoring program continues to provide support for students whose initial contact with our discipline can be eased by working with more advanced peers. Given our loss of budget support, we are rethinking how to teach larger courses and ways to make use of new technologies. Philosophy aims to play an active role in College discussions of these issues, since we want to emphasize the need for adequate writing and discussion opportunities for our students.

Our faculty continues to be productive in its research and our curriculum continues to be marked by innovation (e.g., special courses this year on Bioethics East and West (Ann Mongoven), Philosophy of Sport (John McClendon), American Indian Thought (Kyle Whyte), and Corporations and Social Philosophy (James Roper)). We welcomed an excellent cohort of new graduate students and are on the way to welcoming a solid (though small) group for next year.

In short, the Department is both thriving in some respects and faced with crisis in others. As our contribution to the University's land-grant mission to engage the larger society, we recently ran a workshop on the contributions philosophy and the arts and humanities more generally might make to the challenges posed by the state's economy. Featuring David Hollister (former Lansing mayor and state official and now head of the locally based Prima Civitas) and colleagues in various units; this probed values and ethics of redevelopment, the quality of participation, and the idea of sustainability. We hope this will lead to some joint projects in the fall.

Thanks for your interest in the Department and especial thanks to those who have helped us bring the Hall-Hannah Fund to the level required for an endowment.

Richard T. Peterson

OFFICE STAFF

The Department is pleased to announce that **Joy Franks** is the new Philosophy Office Manager. She comes to us after some years



Julianne Fent

of experience at MSU. Joy replaces **Julianne Fent**, who moves on to new challenges in the Theater Department. Julianne did a wonderful job and will be missed

by both faculty and students. **Jill Perez** continues her excellent work anchoring the graduate and undergraduate programs as Departmental Secretary.



Joy Franks



Jill Perez

Fundraising

In the present economic climate fundraising has become more important than ever. We are grateful to those who have contributed in the past, whether to the Department as a whole or to a special fund like the Hanna-Hall Scholarship fund, which remains short of endowment status. If you are interested in learning more about how you can help, please contact Bridget Paff, Director of Development at 517-353-4725 or via email at paff@msu.edu. To make a gift, please write your check to Michigan State University and mail it to Philosophy, 503 South Kedzie Hall, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824-1032 and indicate AE076 Hall Hannah Endowment or AE07 Dept. of Philosophy on the memo line.

We have begun to work regularly with the College Development office and are grateful for your support and ideas.

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